

**Economic and Social Council**

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**Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial
Information Management****Fifth session**

New York, 5-7 August 2015

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

Global geodetic reference frame

Global geodetic reference frame**Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the global geodetic reference frame working group, which is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the development of a road map for the implementation of the global geodetic reference frame.

Summary of the report

At its fourth session, held in New York from 6 to 8 August 2014, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 4/101, in which it underlined the importance of a widely accepted global geodetic reference frame; endorsed the terms of reference of the working group; agreed to enlarge the working group in order to allow for broader regional representation; requested that the working group continue its activities related to the development of the road map; and requested that the working group report to it at its next session. The Committee of Experts also drafted a resolution on the topic for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, with the recommendation that the Council refer the resolution to the General Assembly for endorsement.

In its report, the working group describes the process whereby the General Assembly adopted resolution 69/266 on a global geodetic reference frame for sustainable development; the initial development by the working group of the road map; and the results of the global questionnaire sent to Member States for the purpose of gathering opinions on the key elements of the global geodetic reference frame and its sustainability.

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

Determination of global fundamental geospatial data themes**Determination of global fundamental geospatial
data themes****Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the development of a set of global fundamental geospatial data themes that would initially serve the needs of the sustainable development agenda.

Summary of the report

At its fourth session, held in New York from 6 to 8 August 2014, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 4/104, in which it agreed that global fundamental geospatial data themes need to be integrated and harmonized from the national to global levels and that actions should be taken in order for Member States and the international community to work jointly towards the preparation, improvement and maintenance of fundamental geospatial data themes, building on existing national and regional fundamental datasets. It acknowledged the need to explore harmonization at the global level, including by identifying strategic priorities, and invited the Bureau to consult with existing working groups as to whether that work could be integrated into their work prior to creating a separate working group.

In its report, the Regional Committee indicates that its working group on core data is investigating the definition and use of core data, also referred to as fundamental data. It describes consultations with the Bureau to consider integrating

* E/C.20/2015/1.



global fundamental geospatial data themes into the work of the working group, the progress of the working group in its efforts to fulfil its regional objectives and the proposals of the Regional Committee on how the work can be developed at the global level.

The Regional Committee considers that engagement with the other regional entities is essential to developing a harmonized set of global fundamental geospatial data themes that can address the needs of the sustainable development agenda.

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda**

**Trends in national institutional arrangements in geospatial
information management****Trends in national institutional arrangements in geospatial
information management****Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the working group on trends in national institutional arrangements. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the way forward for national and global geospatial information management entities to contribute to the development of best practices, sets of institutional models, legal frameworks and evaluation and monitoring methodologies for national geospatial information management.

Summary of the report

At its fourth session, held in New York from 6 to 8 August 2014, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 4/106, in which it welcomed the report prepared by the working group on trends in national institutional arrangements, including its draft terms of reference, work plan and road map. The Committee of Experts noted the strategic importance of national institutional arrangements, particularly given that Member States are at different stages of geospatial development and that institutional and policy frameworks are dependent on legal and fiscal arrangements and governance models which are different across the globe. It encouraged Member States with experience in implementing the issues highlighted to join the working group and/or provide examples of their experiences. The Committee of Experts requested the working group to continue to work with Member States and regional and international entities and to report to it on progress made at the next session of the Committee.

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The report contains information on the work undertaken by the working group and its three task groups during the intercessional period, as follows: production systems analysis, coordinated by Spain; funding structures, dissemination systems and data policy models, coordinated by Mexico; and the structure of geospatial information management organizations and the role of volunteered geographic information, coordinated by Singapore. The work of the task groups focused on the analysis, diagnosis, and identification of best practices across the three areas of work mentioned below.

The report presents the findings from the analysis undertaken of the data received from four global questionnaires covering the three areas of work: (a) geospatial information business model analysis; (b) structure of geospatial information management organizations; and (c) the role of people as users and producers of geospatial information. In addition, it contains proposals on preliminary indexes on evaluating institutional arrangements, assessing relevant issues and identifying best practices.

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda**

**Legal and policy frameworks, including issues related
to authoritative data****Legal and policy frameworks, including issues related
to authoritative data****Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on the legal and policy issues to be considered in developing a framework to support global geospatial information management in the public and private sectors, including issues related to authoritative data. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the way forward in addressing the issue.

Summary of the report

At its fourth session, held in New York from 6 to 8 August 2014, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 4/109, in which it welcomed the report on legal and policy frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data, and noted the increased location-based technological developments around the world that could have an impact on the development of legal and policy frameworks as they apply to the collection, use, storage and dissemination of geospatial information. The Committee of Experts also recognized the concerns expressed by Member States regarding the International Bar Association's proposed convention on geoinformation and agreed that the convention was attempting to address complex geospatial issues that required further careful consideration. Noting that Member States should be exclusively consulted on the formulation and possible establishment of the proposed Convention, the Committee of Experts requested the

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Bureau and the Secretariat to communicate with the Association on the proposed convention and to continue to monitor and inform the Committee and Member States on the emerging legal and policy issues.

In its report, prepared with the assistance of the Centre for Spatial Law and Policy, the Secretariat describes the issues that have an impact on the requisite legal and policy frameworks globally and highlights its engagement with the International Bar Association to draft a convention on geoinformation.

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Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

**Implementation and adoption of standards for the global
geospatial information community****Implementation and adoption of standards for the
global geospatial information community****Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report on the implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community prepared jointly by the Open Geospatial Consortium, technical committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization and the International Hydrographic Organization. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the way forward for the international geospatial information community, including the adoption and implementation of core geospatial standards.

Summary of the report

At its fourth session, held in New York from 6 to 8 August 2014, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 4/110, in which it welcomed the joint efforts of the Open Geospatial Consortium, Technical Committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization and the International Hydrographic Organization to produce a standards guide and a companion document on the importance and availability of technical standards for the geospatial community. The Committee agreed that the standards guide and the companion document are important methodological guidelines to assist Member States in implementing and adopting geospatial standards; and noted that there was still a need to continue to raise the awareness of geospatial standards and related policies, and that relevant case studies and best practices were important means of demonstrating the value to decision makers. The

* E/C.20/2015/1.



Committee of Experts took note of suggestions by Member States to build on the standards guide and companion document to include case studies, the business value proposition, data capture and quality issues, and related policies, and requested the Secretariat to work with international standards organizations and report to it at its next session.

The report describes the initiatives by the international standards organizations to continue their collaboration and build on the standards guide and the companion document, by focusing on the enrichment of the areas of case studies, business value proposition, data capture, quality issues and related policies. The report also provides suggestions for the Committee of Experts to consider on the best means for continuing to raise awareness of geospatial standards and related policies, particularly in the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. As agreed at its fourth session, the Committee of Experts would have the final published standards guide and companion document before it at its fifth session.

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Item 8 of the provisional agenda*

Integration of geospatial, statistical and other information**Integration of geospatial, statistical and other information****Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, which is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the work of the Expert Group and on the way forward for the global geospatial information management community to actively contribute to the integration of geospatial, statistical and other information.

Summary of the report

At its fourth session, held in New York from 6 to 8 August 2014, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 4/105, in which it welcomed the report prepared by the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information and commended the leadership taken by the Expert Group in formulating a programme of work that included an international workshop held in Beijing from 9 to 12 June 2014; and a global forum held in New York on 4 and 5 August 2014, on the margins of the fourth session. The two events prompted solid engagement by and synergy between the statistical and geospatial communities. The Committee of Experts endorsed the terms of reference of the Expert Group, including its programme of work and areas of focus, and took note of the suggestions from Member States regarding the need to consider big data, the 2020 round of censuses and other information as means of integration, while avoiding duplication of efforts.

* E/C.20/2015/1.



In its report, the Expert Group provides information on its recent activities, including the major recommendations of the global forum and the main outcomes of the second meeting of the Expert Group, held in Lisbon in May 2015. Pursuant to the request of the Committee of Experts at its fourth session, the Expert Group also describes progress made towards integration of the 2020 round of censuses into a global geospatial-statistical framework.

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**Application of geospatial information related to
land administration and management**

**Application of geospatial information related to land
administration and management****Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report and background paper on issues related to the administration and management of land, prepared by the Secretariat in collaboration with a group of land tenure/land management experts from United Nations entities and international geospatial organizations. The report and background paper are available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the two documents and to express its views on the way forward for the application of geospatial information to land administration and management.

Summary of the report

At its fourth session, held in New York from 6 to 8 August 2014, the Committee of Experts acknowledged that there was an urgent need for land administration to become a predominant theme in its work. The Committee then approved the addition of the agenda item entitled "Application of geospatial information related to land administration and management", to be addressed by the Secretariat during its intercessional period through the preparation of an issues paper for discussion at its fifth session, in August 2015.

* E/C.20/2015/1.



The information in the report is supported by the background document prepared by the Secretariat in collaboration with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the International Federation of Surveyors, the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other international organizations. In the report, the process by which the issues paper was prepared is also described and the major issues and possible areas of focus to be considered for action by the Committee of Experts are highlighted.

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Item 10 of the provisional agenda**

**Development of a statement of shared guiding principles
for geospatial information management****Development of a statement of shared guiding principles
for geospatial information management****Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the working group responsible for the development of a statement of shared guiding principles, which is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to endorse the statement of shared guiding principles for geospatial information management, with a view to its being referred to the Economic and Social Council for adoption.

Summary of the report

At its fourth session, held in New York from 6 to 8 August 2014, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 4/107, in which it welcomed the report of the working group and endorsed its terms of reference and programme of activities. The Committee of Experts noted the strong consensus on the guiding principles among its members and encouraged Member States to continue to consider the recommended principles and to provide comments for the refinement and endorsement of the principles by the Committee. Furthermore, the Committee of Experts requested that the working group provide a final statement of shared guiding principles for endorsement at its next session.

The report describes the consultative process and the deliberations undertaken with Member States and geospatial experts since the fourth session to refine and revise the guiding principles. The final statement of shared guiding principles is contained in the report for endorsement by the Committee of Experts.

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is made available through the knowledge base portal. The report outlines a number of actions to be taken in order to ensure that the repository of geospatial information management is searchable and continuously updated.

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**Coordination of United Nations activities related to
geospatial information management**

**Coordination of United Nations activities related to
geospatial information management****Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report and background papers on the coordination of United Nations activities in geospatial information management prepared jointly by the Secretariat, the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group, the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and background papers and to express its views on the ways in which the United Nations geospatial information community can better support stakeholders and on how the expertise of the geographical naming community can better contribute to the activities of the Committee.

Summary of the report

At its fourth session, held in New York from 6 to 8 August 2014, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 4/112, in which it expressed its appreciation to the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names for their contributions to the coordination of United Nations activities related to geospatial information. The Committee of Experts stressed the need for continued coordination and the clarification of the roles and responsibilities of geospatial information activities within and outside the United Nations system by the members of Working Group; welcomed the coordination efforts of the Working Group aimed at avoiding

* E/C.20/2015/1.



fragmentation and at using the scarce resources of the United Nations system effectively; encouraged the Working Group to intensify those efforts, also taking into account the regional dimension, and to work closely with the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management secretariat in that regard; and invited the Working Group to report to the Committee at its next session.

In response to the request of the Committee of Experts, the report and background papers describe the activities carried out by the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group, the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs to intensify closer coordination within the United Nations geospatial information community.

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**Activities related to sustainable development and
the post-2015 development agenda**

**Activities related to sustainable development and the post-2015
development agenda****Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on activities related to sustainable development and the post-2015 development agenda. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the ways in which the global geospatial community can contribute to sustainable development and support the post-2015 development agenda.

Summary of the report

At its fourth session, held in New York from 6 to 8 August 2014, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 4/102, in which it expressed its appreciation for efforts promoting the importance of reliable geospatial information in measuring and monitoring the goals of the post-2015 development agenda. It also noted that the current debate on a new United Nations development agenda provided a unique opportunity for the Committee of Experts to raise the visibility and awareness of the importance of geospatial information as an enabler of sustainable development. The Committee of Experts agreed that the understanding and use of geographic and geospatial information in sustainable development, particularly at the policy and decision-making levels, needed to be enhanced, encouraged Member States to ensure that the initiatives and activities related to sustainable development included geospatial information in their national frameworks, and took note of their commitment towards the ongoing discussion on disaster risk reduction.

* E/C.20/2015/1.



In its report, the Secretariat describes the increase in multiple advocacy initiatives that demonstrate the role of geospatial information in sustainable development and the efforts to consolidate the mission of the working group on a global map for sustainable development and mainstream it in the sustainable development context. It also highlights particular efforts in that regard that were undertaken at key global events, including the third High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management on the theme "Sustainable development with geospatial Information", held in Beijing from 22 to 24 October 2014; the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015, at which innovations in the application of earth observations, satellite imagery, geographic and geospatial information, robotics and information communications technology were shown to support the implementation of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction; and a side event on the theme "Unleashing the power of where to make the world a better place: how geographic information contributes to achieving the sustainable development goals", which was held on the margins of the intergovernmental negotiations on sustainable development conducted at United Nations Headquarters in April 2015. In parallel, the global geospatial community has also contributed to the 2015 edition of the United Nations Global Sustainable Development Report, with a special focus on new data approaches for monitoring sustainable development progress in Africa.

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**Programme review of the work of the Committee of Experts
during the 2011-2015 period****Programme review of the work of the Committee of Experts
during the 2011-2015 period****Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on the programme review of the Committee's work during the 2011-2015 period. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the way forward for the global geospatial information management community, including proposals on the modalities and work of the Committee in setting global norms on geospatial information management.

Summary of the report

Taking into account the urgent need to take concrete action to strengthen international cooperation in the area of global geospatial information, the Economic and Social Council decided to establish the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management on 27 July 2011 (see Council resolution 2011/24). The Committee of Experts was established to serve as a formal intergovernmental mechanism to coordinate global geospatial information management activities among Member States, and with the provision that it would function within existing resources. The Council requested the Committee of Experts to present to it in 2016 a comprehensive review of all aspects of its work and operations, in order to allow Member States to assess its effectiveness.

* E/C.20/2015/1.



In its report, the Secretariat provides details on the initial draft of the comprehensive review, with a view to facilitating extensive consultation among Member States and relevant international organizations and United Nations entities. The Secretariat assesses the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts, referring to and considering the terms of reference agreed by the Council, and describes the Committee of Expert's initiatives and accomplishments to date. The Secretariat also provides in its report specific recommendations on the modalities of the Committee of Experts and a way forward for the global geospatial information community.

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Item 15 of the provisional agenda*

**Contribution of regional committees and thematic groups
to the global geospatial agenda**

**Contribution of regional committees and thematic groups
to the global geospatial agenda****Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on the contribution of regional committees and thematic groups to the global geospatial agenda, which is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the operation and achievements of the regional committees and thematic groups.

Summary of the report

The report provides information on the contribution and achievements of the following six regional committees and thematic groups: the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific; the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas; the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa; the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe; the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Arab States; and the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies.

The reports of the regional committees and thematic groups contain information on their activities and achievements since the fourth session of the Committee of Experts, held in New York from 6 to 8 August 2014. The reports also provide an overview of the work of the regional committees and thematic groups in the following areas: (a) contributions to United Nations activities on global

* E/C.20/2015/1.



geospatial information management; (b) legal and policy issues; (c) administrative arrangements; (d) capacity development; (e) publicity and outreach; (f) partnerships; (g) regional and international collaboration; (h) technical issues; (i) priority issues and challenges; and (j) future plans. In its report, the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa invites the Committee of Experts to endorse its formal establishment.
